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# Dole says Civiletti may have obstructed justice

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WASHINGTON — A member of the Senate panel investigating Billy Carter's Libyan ties asserted yesterday that Attorney General Benjamin Civiletti may have obstructed justice by withholding intelligence information about the Billy Carter case.

Sen. Robert Dole (R-Kan.) said in a prepared statement issued in Wichita, Kan., that Civiletti's action would be subjected to "intense scrutiny."

Civiletti made public a prepared statement Wednesday in which he explained that he had seen "highly sensitive" intelligence reports in April disclosing that the Libyan government might be preparing to pay money to Billy Carter, but that he withheld them from Justice Department investigators for nearly two months.

Sen. Birch Bayh (D-Ind.), chairman of the subcommittee investigating Billy Carter, said yesterday that the panel would look into Civiletti's revelation but reiterated that he believed that the attorney general had "responded properly" by keeping the information secret in order to protect intelligence sources.

"What happens to Billy Carter is not really as important as what happens to our country," Bayh said.

But Dole contended that Civiletti's disclosure about withholding the

intelligence information "raises serious questions, including the possibility that the attorney general deliberately obstructed justice."

Civiletti also is under internal investigation within the Justice Department because he discussed the Billy Carter case with the President before the case was resolved. Deputy Attorney General Charles B. Renfrew, sitting in for Civiletti while he is attending a lawyer's conference in Hawaii, issued an order yesterday saying that the department's Office of Professional Responsibility had full power to investigate Civiletti's actions.

Civiletti, in the statement Wednesday, said he had not told investigators about the possibility of Libyan payments to Billy Carter because he did not want to risk compromising the intelligence source that had provided the information or risk aborting the payment, which the report indicated may not yet have occurred.

Dole, however, said, "The investigators handling this case are part of the section of the criminal division which investigates espionage cases.

"They are cleared for and routinely handle the most highly classified and sensitive information which the government possesses. It is difficult to understand why Mr. Civiletti felt

he could not disclose this information to this division."

Bayh said yesterday that the subcommittee was dispatching a team of investigators to Georgia to interrogate the President's younger brother and his associates.

The panel itself has planned no further hearings until Congress returns from recess Aug. 18, after the Democratic National Convention.

In another development yesterday, Libya's Foreign Liaison Bureau said in a prepared statement that Billy Carter's relations with Libya were no different from those of many other Americans and U.S. organizations who cooperate with efforts to "establish closer ties between the Libyan Arab people and the peoples of the world, including the Americans."

Billy Carter "did not betray his country, but was eager to serve the common interests of both the Libyan and American people," that statement said.

Among the organizations listed by the bureau as associates of Libya were several universities with departments of Arab and Islamic studies, and groups representing black Moslems and American Indians. It noted that 150 Americans had attended a conference on American-Arab relations hosted by the Foreign Liaison Bureau.